

BEFORE THE INVESTIGATIVE PANEL OF THE
FLORIDA JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS COMMISSION
STATE OF FLORIDA

INQUIRY CONCERNING A JUDGE NO. 02-337
RE: JUDGE ANA MARIE PANDO

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF DISCIPLINE

The Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission (the AJQC®), served a Notice of Investigation on County Court Judge Ana Marie Pando (AJudge Pando®) pursuant to Rule 6(b) of Rules of the JQC based on information received regarding Judge Pando's conduct during her 1998 and 2000 election campaigns.

The JQC has now entered into a Stipulation with Judge Pando in which she admits that, during the course of her unsuccessful 1998 election campaign and her successful 2000 election campaign, she accepted loans from family members, in excess of the \$500.00 statutory limit, with such loans made for the purpose of influencing the election. Additionally, she misrepresented the source of these loans in submitting and certifying her campaign finance reports during the course of the campaigns, and she made misleading statements regarding the source of a \$25,000 loan in her deposition by special counsel for the JQC. This conduct violated Florida Statutes, Chapter 106 and Canons 1,2, and 7 of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The specific charges are set forth in the Stipulation submitted herewith.

Judge Pando has admitted the foregoing, accepts full responsibility, and acknowledges that such conduct should not have occurred. It appears that Judge Pando

erroneously, but genuinely, believed that such campaign conduct was permissible under controlling state law. Judge Pando now recognizes that her understanding was incorrect, but insists that she acted honestly and in good faith.

The JQC has concluded that there is nothing in the record which causes it to question Judge Pando's honesty or good faith. Further, there are no allegations of improper conduct in that Judge Pando has capably served as a judge in Dade County since 2000. Accordingly, the Commission therefore finds and recommends that the interests of justice, the public welfare, and sound judicial administration will be well served by requiring Judge Pando to pay a \$25,000 fine, as well as a public reprimand of Judge Pando.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard C. McFarlain
Chair, Florida Judicial Qualifications
Commission
305 South Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
(850) 222-2107

and

Thomas C. MacDonald, Jr.
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General Counsel
Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by U.S. Mail to Jose M. Herrera, Esquire, 1401 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Suite 200, Coral Gables, Florida 33134, and to The Honorable Ana Marie Pando, County Court Judge, Dade County Courthouse, 73 W. Flagler Street, Room 507, Miami, FL 33130, on this 23rd day of August, 2004.

Brooke S. Kennerly

Executive Director